AMAN
Transparency Palestine

Report on:

Assessing the preparedness and effectiveness of civil society organizations to participate in public policymaking and accountability for its implementation

Part Two

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Table of contents

Introduction

Palestinian civil society is characterized by its high level of expertise and long history prior to the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), which distinguishes it from civil society institutions in the region. Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, civil society organizations have contributed to supporting the Authority's nascent institutions, sharing their experiences, and supporting them in providing services to rights-holding citizens. Palestinian civil society organizations (PCSOs) continue to play this role as partners in building democratic public institutions that respect human rights and safeguard public freedoms.

The Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) has contributed to strengthening this participatory approach. Civil society organizations (CSOs) have engaged in issues that emerged with the building of official institutions, such as integrity, transparency, accountability and anti-corruption, which are closely linked to human rights. CSOs have produced new programs in defining national priorities and designing public policies. One of the main tasks of CSOs has become monitoring state institutions and their work, and providing feedback, criticism, advice and counsel to them to improve the management of public affairs and public funds, activate social accountability, and combat corruption.

In the last decade, CSOs have faced enormous challenges in the Palestinian national context, exemplified by the internal political division, the dissolution of the PLC, the lack of general elections (presidential and legislative), the monopoly and abuse of power, and the restriction of civic spaces and public freedoms. Since then, CSOs have served as a key pillar of accountability in the absence and weakness of official oversight institutions, especially the PLC and in defending and representing the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups and influencing the formulation and accountability of many public policies.

This publication seeks to build assessment indicators to examine the role of civil society in participating in, influencing, and promoting accountability for public policymaking. The purpose is to reach a more comprehensive picture of the contribution of civil society to public policymaking, especially its preparedness and effectiveness in influencing and promoting accountability for public policymaking. Within a broader context, the Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN) seeks to identify gaps and loopholes related to public policymaking and the role of civic space in it.

Objective of the Report:

In the absence of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), Palestinian civil society has been a key pillar in representing citizens' issues. Its role became more important in public policy's formulation, implementation monitoring, and accountability; Accordingly, this report aims to examine the extent of CSOs' preparedness and effectiveness in influencing public policies and holding public institutions accountable for their implementation, in order to identify gaps, shortcomings, and strengths and come up with conclusions and recommendations aimed at strengthening the role of civil society in this field.

Methodology:

The report adopted a qualitative descriptive approach, i.e., a literature review of CSOs and their contribution. It then analyses this contribution using measurement indicators (research criteria) prepared in advance for this work. The researcher also organized interviews with CSOs representatives, through a purposive sample, taking into account CSOs' specializations and geographical distribution.

For the purposes of this report, the field of research will be limited to civil society organizations and coalitions, and not other components of civil society. Accordingly, the research has been divided into the following: Chapter 1, which includes definitions and basic concepts of the topic of the report; Chapter 2 deals with indicators to examine the role of civil society in the research area; Chapter 3 analyses the preparedness of civil society to participate in public policy making, influencing and accountability; Chapter 4 sheds light on the reality of the effectiveness of civil society institutions in participating in public policy making, influencing and accountability; The report concludes with a specific set of conclusions and recommendations aimed at enhancing the participation of civil society institutions in this area.

Research challenges:

The major research challenge stemmed from the genocide and ethnic cleansing waged by the Israeli occupation state against the Gaza Strip and escalating settlers' hostilities and crimes in the West Bank. It became impossible to carry out research with CSOs in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, the report is limited to West Bank organizations. Furthermore, many West Bank-based organizations became preoccupied with relief and human rights efforts in the Gaza Strip.

Another challenge related to CSOs' representatives' poor knowledge of public policies, whether those written or implemented or any other directions. This represented a time burden during the interviews.

Structure of the Indicators:

Transforming CSOs' organizational structures, their professional work to serve the public in influencing public policymaking, participation and accountability, and the outcomes of this work into a measurable normative framework through clear and professional indicators is not an easy process, especially those of this type. Indicators are a tool to support the evaluation process in a professional manner to provide knowledge about the evaluation process itself, especially identifying gaps to fill them and identifying gains to accumulate and build on them. To achieve the purpose of this index, the indicators will be divided into three main groups, all of which seek to examine and assess the preparedness and effectiveness of civil society organizations in participating in public policymaking, influencing and holding them accountable in order to identify gaps and achievements in this field. These three groups are as follows:

- Structural Indicators: They aim at examining, assessing and collecting information on the institutional structure of the organizations and their programs while assessing the organization's preparedness.

- Operational indicators: They seek to examine the information on the Organization's programs and professional activity to assess and categorize theim in a manner that highlights the organizations' permanent and ad hoc programs. Part of these indicators focusses on assessing the organizations' preparedness while another part assesses their effectiveness.

- Outcome indicators: They seek information on the outcomes achieved by the organizations in the implementation of their permanent and ad hoc programs. These are indicators that focus on the evaluation and monitoring of the organizations' effectiveness.

Research Sample:

The research used a deliberate sample selected by the Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN) in cooperation with the researcher. It included CSOs from different sectors (Human rights, civic, developmental, women, relief). The sampling accounted for geographic distribution to include organizations from the south, north and idle of the West Bank. The sample was as follows:

No.	Organization Name	Representative	Governorate
1	Human Rights and Democracy Media Center – Shams	Dr. Omar Rahhal	Ramallah
2	Palestinian NGOs Against Domestic Violence (Against Women (Al-Muntada	Ms. Sabah Salameh	Ramallah – All Governorates
3	Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)	Dr. Mohammad Al-Abboushi	Ramallah – All Governorates
4	Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation (PYALARA)	Ms. Hania al-Bitar Mr. Hamdi Hamamrah	Ramallah
5	The Palestinian Consultative Commission for Developing NGOs	Dr. Ahmed Hijawi	Jenin
6	Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO)	Ms. Duaa Qurei	Ramallah – all governorates
7	The Center for Defense of Liberties and Civil "Rights "Hurryyat	Mr. Hilmi Al-Aaraj	Ramallah
8	Qader for Community Development	Ms. Lana Al-Bandak	Bethlehem
9	Roles for Social Change Association – ADWAR	Ms. Sahar Al-Qawasmi	Hebron
10	Palestinian Initiative for The Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy – MIFTAH	Ms. Tahreer Al-Aaraj	Ramallah
11	Social and Economic Policy Monitor – Al-Marsad	Mr. Firas Jaber	Ramallah
12	Union of Agricultural Labor Committees	Mr. Fuad Abu Yousef	Ramallah – all governorates
13	Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC)	Mr. Issam Arouri	Jerusalem – Ramallah – Nablus - Salfit

Chapter One: Key Definitions and Concepts:

Indicator[1]

In the context of this index, an indicator represents the derivation of specific information about a situation, case, event, activity, or output that can be observed, monitored, and verified, or information that constitutes a perception, opinion, evaluation, or judgment that enables a link to be established between it and the intended goal of this index, which is to measure the role of civil society in participating in, influencing, and holding accountable public policymaking. The indicators of this index will be used to monitor and assess this role, with its institutional stages, processes, and outcomes, to understand and analyze the preparedness and effectiveness of these institutions, and to provide conclusions and recommendations to enhance this role. This specific illustration of the index constructed in this index requires it to be a qualitative, narrative indicator.

Civil Society[2]

They are individuals and groups who volunteer in forms of participation and public action around shared interests, goals, or values, and work to influence public policies, national strategies, and legislation, as well as lobby for accountability. The term civil society includes but is not limited to NGOs, federations and unions, alliances and networks, political and social organizations, student movements, professionals, universities, and human rights defenders. Civil society plays a vital role in representing society and its groups, supporting and defending their interests locally, nationally, and internationally.

Participation:

Participation can be at various levels of decision-making and takes many forms, especially the provision of information, consultation and dialogue, and partnership in the formulation of decisions, public policies and legislation. This participation relates to the level of participation of rights holders in the various stages of the decision-making process, from program development, formulation, policy development, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and follow-up, and reformulation. Participation is an ongoing practice that requires an open and genuine interaction between public authorities and all segments of society, especially those most vulnerable to marginalization or discrimination, which can be activated through continuous cooperation with civil society actors[3].

Participation is vital for the promotion of democracy and rule of law, as well as social integration and development. It is necessary to reduce inequalities and marginalization. Although liability for the decisions made lies with the public authorities, the participation of different social sectors enables the authorities to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and decisions under discussion. It helps in the identification of gaps and the choices available in the areas of public policies and legislation and their effect on certain categories of individuals and groups. Participation also ensures balance among conflicting interests and renders public authorities more effective, transparent and subject to accountability, which strengthens the legitimacy of their decision.[4]

"1. Everyone has the right, individually or in association with others, to have effective access, a non-

1. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights "Human Rights Indicators – A Guide to Measurement and Implementation.",2012 www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/Human_rights_indicators_ar.pdf
2. United Nation Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights "Civil Society Space and the United Nations Human Rights System – A Practical Guide for Civil Society (www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/AboutUs/CivilSociety/CS_space_UNHRSystem_Index_AR.pdf).
3. UNOHCHR – Guidelines on the Effective Implementation on the Right to Participation in Public Affairs www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/IndexlinesRightParticipatePublicAffairs_web_AR.pdf
4. Conference of International Non-Governmental Organizations of the Council of Europe, "Code of Practice for Peaceful Civic Participation in the Decision-Making Process," adopted in 2009, ref: CONF/PLE(2009)CODE1 (https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016802eed59)

discriminatory basis, to participation in the government of his or her country and in the conduct of public affairs. 2. This includes, inter alia, the right, individually and in association with others, to submit to governmental bodies and agencies and organizations concerned with public affairs criticism and proposals for improving their functioning and to draw attention to any aspect of their work that may hinder or impede the promotion, protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. (Article 08 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights Defenders)[5].

Public Policies:

Public policymaking is an inherent competence of the official public authorities of the state with the aim of achieving the public good. Interest in this process began with the emergence of the behavioral approach in political studies and the shift from studying political structures and institutions to studying the political trends, activities and roles of these structures and their effectiveness in achieving their goals to serve the rights holders/interests, namely the citizens. Public policies may be characterized by positive formulations and interventions to develop and promote specific interests, or negative formulations and interventions, such as prohibiting or limiting specific actions such as anti-discrimination to protect social groups: such as anti-discrimination to protect social groups, or limiting crimes that may be committed by official authorities: In many cases, the silence of the authorities on certain issues can be considered official public policy[6].   Researcher James Anderson has defined public policy as "a purposeful program of action, followed by individual or collective performance in addressing an issue or confronting a specific issue or topic." This definition focused on distinguishing between policymaking and decision-making, which is simply choosing an alternative from among the available alternatives. This definition emphasized the distinction between policymaking and decision-making, which is merely choosing an alternative among the available alternatives: "A program of action that seeks to achieve goals, values, and practices by carrying out specific applications." Ahmed Rashid went further, defining it as "A governmental program of action for a specific future time period, which includes a set of decisions taken by official institutions that are authoritative and binding on all citizens, and aims to achieve the policy objectives[7].

Accountability[8]

It is a system of rules that governs the relationship between those in authority and the rights holders who are affected by the actions of those in authority. It refers to the obligation of those in power to take responsibility for their actions, to justify them to those affected by them, and to subject those in power to some form of enforceable sanction. Accountability requires that those in power have clearly defined tasks and performance standards, allowing their behavior to be assessed transparently and objectively.

Guarantees of freedom of expression, information, assembly, and association are particularly critical to accountability, as they enable the public to effectively participate in decision-making, challenge the policies and actions of public officials, and exercise active citizenship.

5. United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms," adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1999. (https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-and-responsibility-individuals-groups-and).
6. Hussein, Maha, "Public Policy Analysis: Development and Methodology", Journal of the Faculty of Commerce for Scientific Research, University of Alexandria, Issue 1, Volume 55, 2018.
7. Hussein, Maha, ibid.
8. United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Center for Economic and Social Rights, "Who will be held accountable ... Human Rights and the Post-2015 Development Agenda." (www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/WhoWillBeAccountableSummary_ar.pdf).

Promoting accountability creates additional tools for the public to enforce their rights and seek justice when such rights are violated when the duty bearers fail to fulfill their obligations or abstain from performing their roles. Accountability has a corrective function since it allows for dealing with complaints, individual and collective interventions, and sanctioning of the violations committed by government bodies and their officers. Accountability also serves a preventive function since it allows us to identify good performance by political institutions and duty bearers to build on it and detects flaws that require adjustment, correction or repeal. Accountability pinpoints the failures of the system that must be overcome to render policymaking and service provision more effective and responsive.

Social Accountability

Social accountability expresses the submission of the authorities responsible for managing public affairs to the control of society, providing them with reports on the fulfillment of their tasks, in addition to justifying their decisions and explaining their actions, based on the implicit social contract between citizens and authorities, in a democratic framework, in accordance with the basic democratic principle that citizens have the inherent right to demand accountability and that public authorities are obligated to submit to accountability. One of its main requirements is transparency, the ability to ask for clarification and explanation, and the ability to impose sanctions. Social accountability is one of the main pillars of good governance, which promotes the participation of citizens in decision-making processes[9].

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9. "Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in the Face of Corruption", Coalition for Accountability and Integrity - AMAN, 6th edition, 2023. (https://www.aman-palestine.org/reports-and-studies/23572.html)

Chapter Two: Indicators for the assessment of the role of civil society in participation and accountability:

The goal of constructing the indicators in this report is to provide a tool for gathering data and information for a more comprehensive assessment of the role of civil society in participating in, influencing, and holding accountable public policymaking. However, these indicators do not aim to comprehensively survey the interventions of civil society organizations and their relationship with official institutions. Rather, by examining a purposive sample, they seek to measure the general trends of the organizations, monitor the level of influence on public policies and their accountability, and identify gaps in their work and impact. These indicators are intended to be objective in measuring between organizations and to provide a tangible, transparent approach that can be followed up and evaluated afterward.

The indicators:

Preparedness	**Structural Indicators (Institutional/Organizational)** ❖ **Institutionalization of the entity** 1. Does the issue of participation in, influence over, and accountability for public policymaking fall within the main or sub-objectives specified in the entity's statute? Please state and clarify this. 2. Does the entity's strategic plan include the issue of participation in, influence over, and accountability for public policymaking among the goals and/or interventions? 3. Does the entity's strategic plan clearly incorporate the values of participation, will, and initiative to participate in, influence, and hold accountable public policymaking? 4. Does the entity's structure include a major or minor program on participation in, influence over, and accountability for public policymaking? Please indicate and clarify.

Effectiveness	**Operational Indicators** 1. What is the nature of the work organized to participate in public policymaking, lobbying, influencing, changing, and accountability (individual/institutional/joint/coalition)? Please explain this with examples. ❖ **Nature of participation and intervention** 1. How does the entity undertake the task of participating in public policymaking by means of cooperation, contribution and partnership in its development, implementation, lobbying, advocacy, influence, change and accountability (self-determination / joint action with an external initiative / contribution within a coalition program)? Please explain this with examples. 2. What is the nature of the activities of participation in public policymaking, lobbying and influencing for change and accountability (office, field, mass mobilization), with examples. 3. What issues does the entity undertake as part of participating in public policymaking or lobbying for change and accountability (public, economic, social, human rights issues)? Please explain with examples. ❖ **Practical Resources** 1. Does the entity provide financial resources dedicated to implementing the program and activities of participation in public policymaking, lobbying, influencing change, and accountability, or does it need funding from the official budget for policymaking? 2. Does the entity have the human resources to implement the program and activities, or does it use external experts? 3. Does the entity provide regular programs to build human capacities, raise competence, invest in the subjective expertise of the parties involved in policy making and implementation, or means to evaluate their results? 4. Does the entity work to develop knowledge, build institutional capacities, enhance its knowledge tools, and the efficiency of its staff in negotiating, presenting alternatives, and moving from the stage of monitoring and analysis to the stage of demanding action and pressing for development and change? 5. Does the entity urge, encourage, and train citizens (beneficiary groups) to participate in policy development to exercise their right to participate, mobilize them, and exert pressure to influence and change? ❖ **Level of Participation** 1. Does the entity involve one or more members of the General Assembly in the program of participation in making, influencing, lobbying, changing, and holding accountable public policies? Include examples. 2. Does the entity involve the board of directors in a program of public policy making, influencing, lobbying and accountability? Give examples. 3. What is the level of involvement of the entity's executive staff in the program of participation in public policymaking, influence and accountability, i.e., the level of involvement (senior management/program manager/specialized staff/as per staff availability)? ❖ **Level of intervention (local/international)** 1. Does the entity limit its engagement with decision-makers at the local level, or does it utilize its relationships with international organizations or donors to intervene and lobby decision-makers? 2. Has the entity or entities utilized UN mechanisms (treaty bodies or special procedures) and communications during their interventions to participate in, influence, and hold accountable public policymaking? **Output indicators (outputs and outcomes)** 1. What are the impacts of the program on the rights and interests of citizens? Are there any interventions still pending (within the past three years)? 2. What is the impact of individual participation or joint action (coalition/federal) in contributing to influencing public policies? Include examples. 3. Does the entity document its activities in internal reports on failures/achievements and the results of participation in public policymaking, influence and accountability? 4. Does the entity hold internal meetings to evaluate results and draw lessons learned? 5. What are the internal gaps in the entity to effectively implement the program of participation, influence and accountability in public policymaking? 6. What are the external challenges to the implementation of the Participation in Public Policy Making, Influencing, and Accountability program?

Chapter Three: Assessment of civil society's preparedness to participate in, influence, and hold public policy accountable

This chapter examines the structures of civil society organizations and assesses their level of institutionalization and to what extent it enables them to participate in public policy making and to influence these policies and hold policymakers to accounts for them. For this purpose, it reviews the literature of the sample institutions, such as their visions and missions, their general and strategic goals, their strategic plans, and their structural programs to serve these goals. The research sample was diverse in terms of: The size of the entity, its geographical location, its specialization, and its form in terms of: Is it an organization or a coalition? Its age in terms of: Establishment and years of operation. The main observations were as follows:

The Human Rights and Democracy Media Center (Shams), established in 2003, was founded on a vision of a civil and democratic society based on justice, equality, the rule of law, respect for human rights, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to participate in public life, a society that allows everyone to contribute to the progress and advancement of its citizens. The Shams Center is based on a philosophy of encouraging civic participation in order to promote, protect, care for, and defend human rights, in addition to a set of institutional values, including: Volunteerism, Citizenship, Accountability, and Dialogue[10].

The Shams Center expanded its eight objectives, which included: Promoting human rights concepts in Palestinian legislation, issuing, publishing and sponsoring research and studies, and disseminating and promoting a culture of human rights, democracy, and dialogue. To achieve its goals, Shams works through four main programs, including: 1) The Human Rights, Good Governance and Democracy Program, which includes the main activities of the center: Capacity building, awareness-raising and education, focusing on youth to empower them on issues of human rights, good governance, participation, accountability and participation, as well as grassroots institutions on the same issues. It also includes a major activity related to security sector reform, which aims to build a cooperative and dialogic relationship between security force officials and citizens. 2) The Human Rights Media Program, through which the Shams Center seeks to monitor human rights and public freedoms issues and hold dialogues between stakeholders and decision-makers. 3) Disseminating and promoting the values of integrity, accountability and transparency, which deals with mechanisms of good governance, protection of human rights, and combating corruption. The Shams Center's lobbying and advocacy activity is a key activity across its programs, as the Center relies on it to influence public policies in all its programs.

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH) defines itself as an independent civil society organization committed to promoting the principles of democracy and effective dialogue, and seeks national building and empowerment based on the principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and participatory governance[11].

MIFTAH has empowered itself within the framework of participating in, influencing, and holding accountable public policymaking by defining its first objective in its strategic plan as follows "To promote policies and practices consistent with civil rights and social justice in Palestine." This is defined by conducting thematic research on policies, laws and regulations, initiating public dialogues to promote official policies and practices, and empowering stakeholders to support the realization of amended policies and legislation.

10. Huan Rights and Democracy Media Center (Shams), official website, "About Us". (www.shams-pal.org/?page_id=45)
11. Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH), Strategic Plan (2022-2026), "MIFTAH's Core Values," p. 15 (www.miftah.org/Arabic/Programmes/MIFTAH_Strategic_Plan_2022_2026_Arabic.pdf).

MIFTAH explicitly includes accountability, participation, and inclusion among its core values in its strategic plan (2022-2026). To achieve its goals, MIFTAH works through two main programs: 1) Good Governance and Democracy Program; and 2) The first program promotes public policies and practices consistent with civil rights and social justice in Palestine by identifying key public policies and legislation that need to be amended, reformed, or new policies and legislation drafted.

In the context of grassroots organizations, ADWAR for Social Change, based in Hebron governorate, defines itself as a civil society organization that works in the women's empowerment sector and seeks to achieve social justice. Accordingly, ADWAR has identified four main objectives for its work, including: 1) Enabling women and young women to participate effectively in the economy; and 2) Strengthening the role of women in the political and social spheres, environmental protection, corruption reduction, and sustainable development initiatives[12].

Through the social program, ADWAR Association organizes key activities to build youth leadership, through which it supports these leaders to enhance their community participation and build their accountability skills to dialogue with decision-makers, express opinions, and raise societal issues for discussion in an effort to solve them. Within the economic program, ADWAR works to adopt gender-sensitive national economic policies through lobbying, influencing, and holding decision-makers accountable. The political program includes lobbying and accountability to influence government policies and procedures to ensure women's participation in political life, especially local government councils, as well as the protection of their rights, whether on its own as an organization or through active participation in campaigns organized by local or Arab coalitions.

According to Dr. Sahar Al-Qawasmeh, Director General of the Foundation, the Foundation's work to influence public policies and hold them accountable comes within each of the Foundation's programs, through interventions that serve the sub-goals of each main goal of each program. Al-Qawasmeh adds that the foundation is based on a set of key values, including a human rights-based approach, transparency and accountability: A human rights-based approach, transparency and accountability, respect for others, participation and partnership. Regarding the structure of the organization, Al-Qawasmeh said that the structure singles out local lobbying and advocacy as part of the political program, but it serves all three programs of the organization.

Within the framework of networks and coalitions, the Palestinian NGO Forum to Combat Violence Against Women, established in 2000, defines its overall goal as reducing all forms of violence against Palestinian women as a human rights, national, and societal issue. The second main objective was clear, stating: "To influence public policies, laws and regulations related to the issue of violence against women, and to contribute to the issuance of policies, laws and procedures that are fair to women." Al-Muntada explained its work mechanisms in this field by organizing various mobilization and lobbying campaigns that target decision-makers to change policies that encourage violence against women, and issue new policies, procedures, and legislation that are fair to women and protect their rights[13].

Al-Muntada's strategic plan (2022-2025) included the values and principles on which Al-Muntada's work and interventions are based, including: Equality, transparency, justice, volunteerism, partnership, collective action, rejection of exclusion, and social responsibility. In its first goal of unifying feminist discourse on combating gender-based violence, it included several interventions with official bodies, including holding workshops with the Ministry of Education to review curricula related to the image of women and the stereotypical roles assigned to them, and reviewing the policies of the Ministry of Information related to dealing with gender-based violence issues.[14]

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12. ADWAR for Social Change, "Introductory Paper", https://adwar.ps/wa)
13.Palestinian NGO Forum to Combat Violence Against Women, "Rules of Procedure," adopted in 2013..
14. Palestinian NGO Forum to Combat Violence Against Women, "Strategic Plan 2022-2025".

In the third forum's objective, according to the strategic plan: Pressure on decision-makers to develop a set of laws that criminalize all forms of gender-based violence, and the interventions of pressure and advocacy campaigns on official bodies, in order to adopt the Family Protection from Violence Law, eliminate exceptions for early marriage, and draft a gender-sensitive Palestinian penal code, in order to achieve this, Al-Muntada identified the intervention of holding accountability sessions for decision-makers, media campaigns, and peaceful gatherings to achieve it. The fifth goal of the strategic plan: Monitoring and accountability of policies and services for women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence and disability, included interventions that seek to achieve policy integration and comprehensiveness, and quality of services.

Within the same framework of networks and coalitions, the mission of the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO Network), established in 1993, is that it is a democratic coordination framework for 145 Palestinian NGOs, based on a developmental vision to protect the independence of civil work, empower it, and enhance its role in building democracy by influencing public opinion and national plans. Accordingly, the network's third and fourth goals came third and fourth, respectively: 3) Strengthening the network's role in protecting public freedoms and citizenship rights; 4) Influencing legislation, policies, and development and funding plans to strengthen the steadfastness of our people and serve their interests, rights, and the interests of poor and marginalized groups[15].

These goals were reflected in Al-Shabaka's strategic plan for the years (2020-2025), from which the five-year strategic goals were derived, including Goal Two: Strengthening the resilience of Palestinian society by influencing local and international policies, and the third goal: Strengthening social inclusion through active participation in national policymaking. Accordingly, the network's working mechanisms were defined within the framework of organizing the relationship with the government and its institutions, civil work, participation in policies, planning for sustainable development, and working at the policy level from progressive and secular perspectives[16]. The network's structure is structured to fit and achieve its goals through two clear programs, the first of which is internal coordination and capacity building: Internal coordination and capacity building, and the second: Public Relations and Policy Influencing, which in turn oversees the lobbying and advocacy activity, which is linked to the first program as well. Ms. Doaa Qurei, Executive Director of the network, explained that the policy influence track is one of the three main tracks of the network's work, under which the network's lobbying and advocacy work falls.

In the same context of coalitions and networks, the Palestinian Consultative Commission for the Development of Non-Governmental Organizations, established in 2005, serves as a gathering platform for NGOs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with a membership of more than 100 grassroots NGOs working in the humanitarian, social, and developmental fields. The consultative body's activity in influencing and holding public policies accountable falls under the second main objective: "Contributing to strengthening the system of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in society." It is not a main objective in its structure, but Ahmed Abu Al-Haija, Executive Director, explained that influencing public policies and advocacy comes as a main activity, especially in advocating for the issues of marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities and women: People with disabilities and women, as well as policy issues related to local governance. He stressed that the most important issues on which the Commission focuses its knowledge are public policies related to the economic and social rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups. These activities come within the Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law program at KDIPA, which in turn formulated the national lobbying and

15. Palestinian NGO Network, Media Portal, "About the Network." (https://pngoportal.org)
16. Palestinian NGO Network, "Strategic Document (2020-2025)", "Strategic Objectives of Civil Society".

advocacy strategy for persons with disabilities, in accordance with KDIPA's strategic plan (2021-2025). One of the Commission's values and principles is based on integration with the government, which is the basis for the development of the system of rights and services provided by the Commission[17].

In the field of youth organizations, the Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation - PYALARA, founded in 1999, seeks to build the capacities of Palestinian young women and men and provide them with skills that enable them to claim their rights and build a democratic society through participation, social entrepreneurship, and the integration of youth in decision-making processes at the local and national levels. PYALARA believes that decisions should not be imposed from the top down, but that young people should play a role in identifying and diagnosing the issues they suffer from, and then lobbying officials and decision-makers to bring about the required political change. The foundation's approach focuses on capacity building, community initiatives, and organizing lobbying and advocacy campaigns for change locally and nationally[18].

Based on its vision of "a more aware and empowered Palestinian youth who are actively engaged in the process of democratic change," PYALARA has set its first goal: Palestinian youth are more resilient, engaged, and able to face economic, social, and political challenges. Through its "Youth Development" and "Youth Rights" programs, PYALARA seeks to empower youth to actively participate in processes of societal change, and for youth as "rights holders" to be better able to claim and promote their rights, respectively. Hania Al-Bitar, Director General of the Foundation, added that it aims to build a generation of empowered leaders who believe in their rights and seek to promote these rights through mobilization, advocacy, and influencing public policies. Al-Bitar explained that the organization's strategic plan (2022-2026) has adopted its core values, including: Participation, transparency, accountability and governance, in addition to democracy and human rights, considering them the cornerstone of the organization's work and activating the roles of youth in influencing and changing. Al-Bitar stressed that the foundation's mobilization and advocacy activities are through programs implemented jointly by young people.

Within the context of specialized institutions, the Qader for Community Development, established in 2008, seeks to promote full citizenship and real participation of people with disabilities in Palestine, in all aspects of life. As part of its mission, QADER works to align social, institutional, and policy contexts with the principles of "disability inclusion" and "leaving no one behind" in Palestine. QADER's professional work is based on a set of values such as: Participation, integrity, transparency, accountability, and courage, which is defined as the boldness to raise ideas, demands, and social accountability based on evidence, proof, and objectivity, as a basis for fulfilling rights and achieving inclusion and true participation for all. The Qader Foundation has set its strategic goals for the years (2023-2027), and its first goal was: "National policies and legislation are harmonized with international conventions on the rights of persons with disabilities and are adhered to by duty bearers[19].

Ms. Lana Bandak, General Manager of QADER, stated that the advocacy and accountability program is the most important program in the organization, and it is through my programs with other programs. She added: The value of courage on which the current strategic plan was based, along with other values, took up a large part of the discussion, especially with regard to the organization's ability as part of civil society to be courageous in influencing public policies, courageously questioning, and courageously addressing its issues.

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17. Consultative Commission for the Development of NGOs, "Strategic Plan" (2021-2025) – Influential civil society and dignified living", 2021

18. Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation (PYALARA), "Introductory paper on PYALARA (https://pyalara.org/about-us))

19. Qader for Community Development, "Who We Are", Strategic Objectives. (https://www.qader.org/ar)

The Center for the Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights - Hurryyat, which was founded in 1992 and officially registered in 2003, is based on a clear vision, which is "a free and democratic Palestinian society, based on the principle of respecting the rule of law and social justice, and preserving all rights and freedoms in accordance with Palestinian laws and legislation, and in a manner that does not conflict with human rights laws and international humanitarian law." The work of the Hurryyat Center is also based on a set of values, including: human rights, the rule of law, dialogue, tolerance, integrity, and transparency. In terms of influencing policies and legislation related to civil rights and freedoms, and ensuring their implementation, it is a major input into its work to achieve its second general goal: "Empowering marginalized groups to exercise civil and political rights and freedoms in Palestinian society," which are clear inputs and goals in the Center's strategic plan (2022-2025)[20].

Mr. Hilmi Al-Araj, the center's executive director, stated that the Hurryyat Center was an extension of the Freedom Defense Committees, which were formed in 1985 in response to the iron-fist policy adopted by the then Prime Minister of the occupation state, Yitzhak Rabin. It was later redressed with the establishment of the Palestinian Authority to be in line with the Palestinian reality and to work within the auspices of the Palestinian Authority in order to protect human rights. The path of pressure, advocacy and networking became the center's priority in the framework of influencing public policies.

In a related context, but more clearly in addressing public policies from civil society institutions, the Economic and Social Policy Monitor (Al-Marsad) was established in 2012 and registered in 2014 by a group of academics and researchers as an initiative specialized in monitoring, studying, analyzing, and criticizing social and economic public policies at the overall and procedural levels. It aims to provide a tool to ensure the protection of the economic and social rights of Palestinians, especially the most marginalized groups. Based on a vision of "a Palestinian society that enjoys freedom and social justice," Al-Marsad seeks, through its seven strategic objectives, to primarily influence public policies[21].

In order to influence public policies, Al-Marsad relies on a set of values documented in its strategic plan (2023-2027), including: Advocacy: the ability of Al-Marsad and its partners to change through advocacy and continued lobbying on decision-makers, cooperation and solidarity in order to bring about change: which focuses on joint work, cooperation between all social actors and those who believe in social justice, and commitment to the issues of the marginalized: whether they are groups or regions that are excluded by current public policies from fair and comprehensive development.

Mr. Firas Jaber, researcher and founder, stated that influencing public policies and accountability for them has been the core of the Marsad's work structurally since its inception, and is not a product of the development or transformation of its work, as the basis of the observatory's work is knowledge production directed towards social change and influencing public policies through the path of pressure and advocacy. Jaber added: The structural work of the observatory is based on areas of influence (programs), which are the priority issues in the observatory's work, including: 1) the right to comprehensive education; 2) work and social protection; 3) tax justice; and 4) the right to health, all of which include public policies.

20. Center for Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights - Hurryyat, Official Website, "About Us". (https://hurryyat.net).
21. Economic and Social Policies Monitor – Al-Marsad, "Strategic Plan (2023-2027), Dignified life for all ", December 2022

Findings:

1. Literatures of the sample civils society organizations and structures varied between direct preparedness to influence public policies and hold them to account, like the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH), and the Palestinian NGOs Forum Against Domestic Violence Against Women (Al-Muntada), the Palestinian NGOs Network (Al-Shabaka), Qader Association for Social Development, The Economic and Social Policies Monitor (Al-Marsad), and indirect preparedness to influence public policies or preparedness to influence sub or secondary policies like the Center for Human Rights and Democracy Media (Shams), and Roles For Social Change (Adwar), and the Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation (PYALARA) and the Center for Defense of Freedoms and Civil Rights (Hurryyat).

2. NGOs ability to influence sub or secondary policies has tangible benefits on local communities or stakeholders while direct interventions in public policies require longer time and result in a less visible effect on stakeholders. This is particularly true in the case of public issues, which are more clearly addressed in Chapter Four.

3. Civil society organizations embrace public visions and missions such as "democratic society, rule of law, … etc." This gives them flexibility in setting their programs and development or changing their directions. However, this makes their directions too loose to deal with public policies or take part in their drafting. In other words, these visions are not clearly specialized in the strategic issues they address.

4. Civil society organizations interests in public polices varied. Some were fully focused on macro (central) policies while others addressed secondary (local) or sectoral policies where influence can be bigger. This appears in their strategic plans and list of priority issues.

5. Influencing public policies and accountability thereof resulted from the development or shift in the activity of NGOs and not from a structural perspective, especially as government institutions developed their work and depended on public policies and sectoral and non-sectoral plan. As a result, NGOs started to exhibit an unclear identity.

6. NGOs do not adopt strategic plans to lobby and influence public policies although these plans could fill the structural gap for this task. With such plans, it could be possible to turn this issue into collective action within the organization.

Chapter Four: Civil Society Participation Effectiveness in the Making, Influencing, and Accountability of Public Policies

This chapter seeks to review and analyze the effectiveness of civil society institutions in participating in, influencing, and holding accountable public policies. For this purpose, it applies operational indicators that address the nature of the institutions' participation and interventions, their financial and human resources, their capacity building, the level of participation of the institutions' bodies and staffs in the influence process, and the level of the institutions' intervention at the international level, whether through their international partners and influencers or through UN mechanisms. The level of involvement of institutions at the international level, whether through their international partners and influencers or through UN mechanisms, in addition to analyzing the outcomes of the operations carried out by the institutions, achievements, failures, documentation, follow-up, lessons learned, internal institutional gaps, and the challenges of the external environment that limit and negatively affect the participation process.

Nature of Participation and Intervention:

The Human Rights and Democracy Media Center (SHAMS) seeks to participate in public policymaking, both macro and local, through organized individual work and through local coalitions, such as the Coalition Against Torture, the Coalition for Legislative Oversight, the Civil Coalition for the Protection of Civil Peace, the Civil Forum for Promoting Good Governance in the Security Sector, and the Palestinian Coalition for Judicial Reform. Dr. Omar Rahal said: The Shams Center has been an initiator and founder of several coalitions, and a secretariat member in other coalitions. Shams Center has contributed to many position papers and press releases, and initiated many meetings with government agencies. Dr. Rahal added that in many cases, Shams has initiated field protests in demanding, feminist, and youth issues, and believes that civil society focuses on civil and political issues, without neglecting economic and social issues, such as youth participation in decision-making, and combating hate speech, which comes within the center's specialization.

In the same context, Sabah Salameh said: Al-Muntada recognizes the difficulty of working to influence public policies on the one hand, and believes in the importance of collective action on the other hand, so Al-Muntada takes the path of pressure and advocacy to influence public policies, through the initiative to form coalitions or participate in existing coalitions. For example, Al-Muntada is part of the coalition to amend the Personal Status Law, led by the General Union of Palestinian Women, and part of the CEDAW coalition and the coalition to amend the Palestinian Penal Code. On the other hand, Salameh adds, Al-Muntada took the initiative to form a coalition targeting Gaza Strip women in the West Bank, whose livelihoods were cut off due to the war on Gaza, and seeks to provide them with psychological, relief and material support, thus putting pressure on the Ministries of Social Development and Health to change their sectoral policies and harmonize them to respond to the needs of this group. Al-Muntada has also initiated a coalition to push for the promulgation of the Family Protection from Violence Law, which includes, in addition to civil society organizations, political parties and social forces, and represents civil society at the Cabinet table during discussions related to the law.

Al-Muntada is also a member of the National Committee to Combat Violence Against Women, which worked on revising the National Strategy to Combat Violence Against Women, adopted by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Salameh stresses that most of the issues and questions related to violence against women, or related to women's issues, whether at the level of government policies or official programs, Al-Muntada participates in to influence them, and the government considers Al-Muntada an active party that communicates its invitation to participate.

For her part, Ms. Hania Al-Bitar said that official institutions invite NGOs that agree with them when formulating their public policies, which makes other institutions of common interest not keep abreast of this process, and are later surprised when the public policy is issued, and their goal becomes to amend this policy in line with youth rights. She gave an example regarding the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, which excluded Pyalara from participating in the formulation of its latest sectoral strategy, which forced Pyalara to send a letter of protest. She added that the foundation repeatedly worked with the Ministry of Local Government to amend the age of candidacy to ensure effective youth participation, and at a certain point, the foundation initiated the formation of a coalition of nearly 70 youth organizations and clubs to influence by activating the role of youth themselves by participating in meetings with officials and lobbying them.

On the other hand, Ms. Doaa Qurei, Executive Director of the PNGO Network, explains that the network's participation in influencing public policies takes place in two stages, the first is sectoral within the network, where the sector works to intervene with the official authorities in order to influence, and the second is in case the issue becomes a public opinion issue, where all sectors of the network work in a unified manner, and the work is led by the specialized sector. She added that, for example, the network's social protection sector monitored the development of the draft social security law and intervened to influence it and amend it in favor of employees, and then all sectors of the network began to work jointly when the issue of social security became a public opinion issue of concern to all sectors. Qurei reports that the network has taken the initiative to shed light on many public policy issues, such as the amendment of the Civil Society Organizations Law in 2021, while external initiatives come to it to participate in them: such as women's rights and combating violence against women.

Regarding the nature of Roles for Social Change's participation, Ms. Sahar Al-Qawasmi said that the organization is tasked with influencing public policies through coalitions of NGOs based in Ramallah, such as the CEDAW Coalition, the Gender Forum in Local Governance, the Civil Coalition to Amend the Personal Status Law, and the Civil Coalition for Judicial Reform and Oversight. She added that the foundation is a member of the Consultative Committee of the Council of Ministers, formed by the government of Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, and a member of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Women, both of which aim to influence public policies related to Palestinian women. Ms. Qawasmi explains Al-Qawasmi explains that ADWAR privileges working with grassroots organizations and stakeholders in Hebron governorate to influence sub-policies related to services, as Al-Qawasmi believes that a change in procedures will contribute to a change in policies, whether written or unwritten. Al-Qawasmi presented an example of influence and accountability achieved by ADWAR, which restored a public policy that was followed during the era of the late President Yasser Arafat, namely the appointment of 5% of public employees from residents of Area C to support their steadfastness, a policy that ended with his death. Since 2019, the Foundation began holding accountability sessions for decision-makers in the governorate, with the participation of the targeted groups of women, who in turn held them accountable and put pressure on them, until they succeeded in employing a group of women in various positions, such as school principals, nurses in health clinics, and others.

Dr. Tahrir Al-Araj, Executive Director of the Palestinian Initiative for The Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH), emphasizes that the foundation is based on dialogue, whether international or local, for the sake of democratic change and good governance. She adds: MIFTAH is based on two main programs, the first local program called Democracy and Good Governance, which includes the two tracks of influencing public policies based on the principles of social justice, as well as lobbying and advocacy, and the second program related to the Palestinian narrative and digital diplomacy, which includes the international advocacy track. Dr. Al-Araj emphasizes that MIFTAH specializes in

influencing public policies, and therefore works in this field individually, as the organization organizes policy meetings and hearings for decision-makers, such as the public policy of government spending on positions of responsibility. This is in addition to its joint work with civil society organizations through coalitions and networks, such as the Security Oversight Coalition, the Budget Oversight Coalition, and Al-Muntada to Combat Violence Against Women. MIFTAH also specializes in knowledge production related to public policies, and organizes its meetings to influence based on this knowledge production.

In turn, Mr. Ahmed Al-Hijawi states that the nature of the work of the Advisory Body for the Development of Civil Institutions depends on the issues it addresses. It usually works jointly with grassroots institutions on partial public policy issues, and on comprehensive or national public policy issues, the body works through its membership in coalitions such as the Civil Action Coordination Council. In specific cases, the body works individually if it specializes in the issue under influence. Al-Hijawi adds: The Advisory Body took the initiative and launched a national campaign in 2019 for the (100 Days) campaign to monitor the performance of Dr. Shtayyeh, and more than (90) grassroots institutions participated in the campaign. In another context, the Advisory Body participated, through its membership in the Civil Coalition for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in discussing drafts of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, while it participated individually in the discussions facilitated by the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers on the general policies of the Companies Law during the year 2021.

Mr. Firas Jaber says that Al-Marsad works on three tracks to influence public policies and work in the field of social change. The first is knowledge and research production, the second is the lobbying and advocacy track, and the third is building alliances and networking. Within the alliance track, Al-Marsad works in a bilateral partnership with institutions, such as the Independent Commission for Human Rights, Al-Haq Foundation, and the Stars of Hope Association for the Empowerment of Women with Disabilities, or jointly through coalitions, such as the Economic and Social Rights Coalition (Adala). Jaber adds that Al-Marsad usually takes the initiative to diagnose a specific issue based on objective factors, and begins working on it as an issue of influencing public policies.

In this context, Dr. Muhammad Al-Aboushi, Director General of the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, explains that society works in an individual institutional manner in a bilateral relationship with the Ministry of Health; this is due to the nature of the work specialization, and the nature of the influence on the sectoral policies of the Ministry. It is a commitment that has its branches, which include licenses, general health protocols, chronic disease programs, and the quality of medical laboratories. This does not conflict with effective collective work, through coordination and networking with civil society institutions and coalitions. The Society is a member of the network of civil society organizations, and the health sector in it, and through the network, it coordinates work with the Civil Action Coordination Council. Dr. Al-Aboushi: The issue of national health insurance as a model for influencing public policies, as the government tried to monopolize it for the benefit of the Ministry of Health, in terms of management and the basket of services, and to give preference to the government sector over other sectors. Accordingly, the Society sought, through the health sector in the network, to create a unified national health insurance that guarantees equal rights for all, and ensures access to health services, while granting freedom of choice to stakeholders, based on the right to health. However, the president formed the National Health Insurance Board of Directors by decree, without consulting with the relevant civil society institutions, which made the issue falter.

Regarding the nature of the work to influence public policies, Salama notes that Al-Muntada's work in influencing public policies comes at two levels: The first level: is office-based, based on meetings, workshops, and the presentation of position papers and policy papers, as was Al-Muntada's work in the field of the National Referral System for Abused Women, which was issued in 2013 at the initiative

of civil society and amended in 2022, also as a result of our initiative. The second level: is field-based in cases where official bodies do not respond to pressure on them, whether through media campaigns or through public protests and sit-ins, as we carried out several sit-ins in front of the headquarters of the previous Council of Ministers (Dr. Shtayyeh's government) to demand the enactment of the Family Protection from Violence Law.

Al-Bitar added: "PYALARA uses several means to influence public policies, including issuing studies, policy papers, and demand papers, holding official meetings with decision-makers, in addition to field work. In 2010, PYALARA launched a national campaign to pressure the Council of Ministers to confront the phenomenon of escalating violence among youth. It carried out several sit-ins in front of the Council of Ministers headquarters, which prompted the government of Dr. Salam Fayyad to respond and decide to consider October 10 of each year as the Day of Tolerance and Community Nonviolence. PYALARA addresses various national and public issues and basic rights that concern youth, including digital rights. PYALARA took the initiative to form a youth initiative (Think Tank) to discuss national issues from a youth perspective, and includes youth from the Palestinian diaspora, and they issued a youth position paper to achieve national unity."

While Ms. Sahar Al-Qawasmi points out that ADWAR Association plays an office role, issues fact sheets, policies and demands, and organizes accountability sessions periodically between decision-makers on the one hand, and women stakeholders on the other hand, after receiving capacity-building sessions, holding preparatory meetings to determine demands, in addition to organizing peaceful gatherings and public stands to influence.

As an institutional coalition, the PNGO Network mobilizes its member institutions in the field, according to Qurei, but she sees that there is a weakness that has marred the work of civil society in field mobilization, during the recent period, which is a result of the division of opinion and positions between civil institutions. As for the Miftah Foundation, it participates in peaceful field gatherings organized by civil society in order to influence public policies, but the foundation does not organize gatherings as a political institution, not a popular one.

Regarding field mobilization, Al-Hijawi said: The Authority participates in field mobilization, such as the teachers' strike, to support legal demands, in addition to its work in issuing political papers in its field of specialization. He added: The Authority specializes in human rights issues, but it participates with civil society institutions in their positions on public and national issues.

Regarding the nature of the work itself to influence public policies, Dr. Al-Aboushi states that the relief works at the office and field levels, where it previously mobilized for peaceful demonstrations and marches in several governorates regarding comprehensive health insurance, and the second level is networking with influential people such as members of the Legislative Council, during its term, stressing that medical relief is based on a legal basis in its work and demands, especially the right to health, while other public issues are complementary issues, not primary.

Operational Resources:

The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Against domestic Violence Against Women (Al-Muntada) relies on financial resources allocated to implement the program of participation in public policymaking, more than other institutions, especially since Al-Muntada is not registered with any official body, and does not have an independent financial entity. Therefore, Al-Muntada members are the ones who implement Al-Muntada's strategic plan from their own financial resources, which is a factor of strength for the sustainability of Al-Muntada's work in influencing, especially the presence or absence of private financial resources. It also gives the coalition freedom to work and

independence. The same context applies to human resources, as Al-Muntada relies on the expertise of the staff of member institutions, their volunteers and their bases to implement most of its activities and publications. In some publications, a member institution may rely on an external researcher to produce them for the benefit of Al-Muntada, according to Al-Muntada's strategic plan.

Regarding building the capacities of the human cadres of the member institutions, Salameh says: Capacity building is one of the goals of Al-Muntada, and therefore it is determined based on a survey of their needs in Al-Muntada's work issues, and one of the member institutions undertakes to implement it, such as building the capacities of institutions in harmonizing and integrating the issues of women with disabilities in their work in the field of lobbying, advocacy and influencing public policies, and building capacities in the field of using modern technology in the path of lobbying and advocacy, which was implemented by the Women's Affairs Team for the benefit of Al-Muntada.

Salameh points out that Al-Muntada and its members work to build the capacities of stakeholders, and that goes beyond women only, but they also work to build the capacities of young men to participate in change. She gives the example of Al-Muntada's work on the (16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence) campaign, where Al-Muntada worked to build the capacities of beneficiary groups to influence and hold accountable public policies, and actively involved them in campaign planning, implementation, and evaluation of outcomes. This is the case with PYALARA, which works to build the capacities of young stakeholders on influencing and holding accountable public policies, before involving them in meetings with decision-makers, or participating in accountability sessions. The consultative body makes the same effort to build the capacities of the grassroots institutions it works with, in addition to marginalized groups, specifically persons with disabilities and women in the governorate.

In the context of operational resources, Ms. Hania Al-Bitar explained that the financial budget of PYALARA is average, and is usually sufficient to ensure the continuity of work. The Association does not have a sustainable source of funding, and therefore it implements its goals and programs through funded projects, meaning that each project includes influence, pressure and advocacy, and therefore, the activities of the foundation usually exceed financial resources, and the foundation aspires to provide financial resources to enhance its role in the field of influencing public policies and accountability. As for human resources, Al-Bitar explains that the foundation's staff exhausts all its energies in implementing projects, and staff members do not have the luxury of specializing in specific fields, as all members have become experienced in the field of pressure and advocacy. In specific cases where the issue exceeds the expertise and energies of staff members, (PYALARA) resorts to cooperating with external experts, such as completing some training or completing studies.

It is worth noting that the financial budget of the PNGO Network is based on the lobbying, advocacy and influence program, which is reflected in human resources, as the network allocates a coordinator for local lobbying and advocacy affairs, and another for international affairs. According to Qurei, the local advocacy coordinator also coordinates a committee within the network composed of local advocacy officials in its member institutions; to increase and enhance local influence on public policies. Qurei adds that the network is a member of international coalitions and networks that take the initiative to hold training courses to build capacity in the field of mobilization and advocacy, and the network usually involves individuals from the staff of member institutions in these trainings, as they are stakeholders in the network. The network also seeks the help of external experts; In order to prepare policy papers and critical papers for government policies, according to specialization, as long as there is no specialist in the network or its members, or due to lack of time, and among them was a research fact sheet on the impact of the Monetary Authority's policies in combating terrorism and money laundering on civil institutions.

ADWAR provides funding for policy influence, lobbying and advocacy, within the projects it receives, according to A. Al-Qawasmi, who says: The funding policies do not cover administrative expenses, which allows for flexibility in work in the organization, which is reflected in human resources, as all members of the staff, consisting of (11) female employees in the West Bank and Gaza, are involved in the path of lobbying, advocacy and influencing public policies. Al-Qawasmi adds: The organization invests in building the capacities of its staff continuously, whether locally or internationally.

As a policy institution, MIFTAH allocates a special item in its annual budget to influence public policies, which includes spending on a number of interventions, such as knowledge production, holding dialogue meetings, and listening sessions with decision-makers, in addition to networking meetings with civil society; to influence public policies. This is reflected in human resources, as MIFTAH relies on a qualified staff; to influence public policies, in addition to its reliance on external experts for knowledge production in the field of public policies. MIFTAH also benefits from the expertise of the members of the administrative body and their abilities to influence public policies, and gives them space to lead policy dialogues, including Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Chair of the Board of Directors, and Dr. Azmi Al-Shuaibi, Dr. Abdul Qader Al-Husseini, and Nour Odeh, members of the Board. Dr. Al-Araj said that (Miftah) works according to its new strategy to build the capacities of grassroots institutions in the field of influencing and holding public policies accountable, whether at the central or sub-level in the governorates or work sectors, and from there (Miftah) also deduces local demands to influence public policies.

Like other institutions, the Consultative Board provides funding sources for lobbying and advocacy campaigns through projects, not within the general budget, as the Board does not rely on fixed funding sources, which is reflected in the lack of an official responsible for the file of influencing public policies, as the institution suffers from weakness in this field; therefore, it seeks the help of external experts according to need, but rather relies on advocacy as a path to influence, and the Board provides training for its staff in the field of advocacy and influence, whether on its own initiative or through invitations from specialized institutions, such as the (Hamla) Center, which specializes in advocacy through social media, or the Arab Campaign for Education, where the staff participated in training on gender policy analysis.

While Dr. Al-Aboushi explains that Medical Relief Society follows an annual slogan during its work, and allocates a financial item within the general budget to achieve it, including influencing public policies related to that slogan, he stresses that relief work is based on human resources, initially on volunteering to reduce expenses as much as possible, in exchange for ensuring that services reach stakeholders, which sometimes includes reducing expenses on conferences and workshops. As for capacity building, Dr. Al-Aboushi explains that relief works on two levels: the first: through its College of Community Health, which works, among other issues, to build the capacity of the association's staff in the field of lobbying and advocacy. The second level: relates to building the capacity of stakeholders, especially marginalized groups in society, including people with disabilities, regarding their health rights, in addition to building the capacity of youth groups supporting relief issues.

With regard to investment in human resources and energies, Mr. Issam Al-Arouri, General Director of the Jerusalem Center for Legal Aid and Human Rights, explains that the center relies on groups of local volunteers in the center's areas of operation, and builds their capacities annually in the field of influencing public policies, or sub-policies related to local policies, and the center links them to its internal referral system. The center also targets grassroots cooperative, women's and youth institutions, with annual training and capacity building on social organization, mobilization and advocacy to influence public policies, in addition to brainstorming meetings to derive public or sub-policy issues, which the center will work on in cooperation with them.

Level of Participation:

 Al-Muntada is represented in most official meetings related to influencing public policies, by its coordinator, in partnership and coordination with member institutions. In a different context, (PYALARA) involves members of the general bodies and the administration in representing the institution in its specialized issues. Al-Bitar notes that the institution, based on its belief in building young, renewed leaderships, its representation is distributed across all executive levels, and that the administration only represents it in specific cases. In issues of influencing policies, the institution involves young stakeholders in official meetings with decision-makers, or media meetings in the field of lobbying and advocacy.

The NGOs Network is usually represented in official meetings related to influencing public policies by the coordinator of the specialized sector, who is responsible for providing feedback to the members of the sector. The role of the executive director is limited to administrative and coordination meetings, whether with member institutions or official bodies, and the role of the small network staff is limited to meetings with civil society.

Al-Hijawi believes that the members of the Board of Directors or the General Assembly are not as aware, active, or effective, which prompts the Consultative Board to involve the active members of them, according to their specialization in the issues in which the Foundation intervenes at the level of public policies, including Mr. Omar Mansour, in the field of civil society, Mrs. Farha Natour, an activist in the field of refugees, lawyer Ghada Shadid, who participates in gender issues, and Mr. Ammar Abu Bakr, a specialist in economic policies, all of whom are members of the Board of Directors of the Authority.

Dr. Al-Aboushi explained that the members of the General Assembly are obligated to volunteer hours within the work of the association, which includes various issues that Medical Relief works on. As for the members of the Board of Directors, they have specific tasks that they do not engage in more than, with the exception of the Chairman of the Board of Directors, due to his experience, who participates in meetings related to influencing public policies, based on the nature of his dedication. Regarding the staff, Dr. Al-Aboushi explains that Medical Relief works in a horizontal direction, meaning that each member of the staff represents the relief according to his specialization in official meetings related to public policies, in order to benefit from his expertise. For example, the College of Community Health affiliated with the relief is represented by one of its staff in the meetings of the Higher Education Council, and not the Director General of Medical Relief. In his opinion, the job grade is not the decisive factor in representing the relief.

Level of Intervention:

Regarding the request for intervention from regional or international parties, Al-Muntada deals with it with great caution. Salameh stated that during Al-Muntada's work on the issues of the Family Protection from Violence Law and the Protection of Women Human Rights Defenders, Al-Muntada met with its regional and international partners and raised these issues to exchange experiences on how to deal with and influence official bodies, without asking them to intervene. Salameh added: Al-Muntada sometimes burdens its international partners, such as the Arab Coalition for Women Human Rights Defenders, with some questions and inquiries to be raised by their partners during their meetings with official Palestinian bodies, or asks them to sign and join press statements and positions.

Al-Bitar, in turn, believes that civil society does not resort to international partners unless it senses danger to it, the government's monopolization of it, the escalation of repression, and the shrinking

of its spaces. Accordingly, (PYALARA) distinguishes well between positive international intervention in the interest of the national and social fabric, and negative intervention, which it avoids. While Al-Hijawi believes that he understands if an institution resorts to its international partners in order to pressure the government to amend certain public policies, in light of the government's intransigence in responding to civil society, but they do not participate in this level of intervention.

In this context, Ms. Qurei says: International partners usually resort to the PNGO network to inform them of a specific issue, without the network submitting specific requests; which they in turn convey to the official authorities. In turn, Dr. Al-Aboushi confirms that in national issues, it is not possible to seek help from foreigners, but relief may clarify its position on specific public policies, if it is asked to do so during meetings with internationals, without asking them to intervene with the government or the relevant official authorities.

Dr. Al-Araj says that MIFTAH has never sought support from international partners, and is against resorting to them. She believes that the effort exerted in the field of influencing public policies must be local. On the other hand, MIFTAH rejects the demonization of civil discourse or the restriction of its spaces, whether by conservative local groups or official bodies. In many cases, MIFTAH works to hold international parties accountable for their efforts and role in supporting rights and freedoms in the Palestinian reality.

Regarding the United Nations mechanisms for the protection of human rights, whether contractual or non-contractual mechanisms, Salameh said: Al-Muntada participates in the meetings of the human rights convention committees, and submits shadow reports to a number of committees, including a report submitted last year to the Committee on Civil and Political Rights, preceded by a report by the CEDAW Committee. Al-Muntada addresses specific issues, such as violations of the rights of women human rights defenders, or violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. For its part, (Bialara) faces a large gap in the use of the United Nations mechanisms for the protection of human rights in both its aspects: contractual and non-contractual mechanisms, but it recently joined the National Committee for the CEDAW Convention, which opened the way for it to review national policies related to women, according to Al-Bitar.

A. Qurei stated that the network communicates with the United Nations contractual mechanisms, where it submitted, in partnership with its member institutions, a shadow report to the Committee against Torture in 2023. In the same context, Al-Hijawi stated that the Commission had participated with other institutions in shadow reports in which it showed the government's failure to respond to civil society's demands to amend public policies in accordance with international human rights law, specifically the shadow report of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2021, and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to education in 2023. As for medical relief, according to Al-Aboushi, it does not communicate with the United Nations mechanisms, but through the network of civil society organizations it cooperates in drafting correspondence and shadow reports, especially with regard to the freedom of associations to operate.

Miftah participates in work at the level of United Nations mechanisms in order to influence public policies, through shadow reports, which it submits to the United Nations treaty committees. It has submitted reports to the CEDAW Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Committee on Civil and Political Rights, and submitted a parallel report to the Beijing Conference, concerned with policies related to women's issues.

Ms. Al-Qawasmi stated that Adwar Foundation participated in drafting joint shadow reports and included unfair public policies against women in two reports addressed to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Elimination of Violence against Women (CEDAW).

Findings:

Ms. Sabah Salameh considers the amendment of the National Referral System for Abused Women in 2022 to be an achievement that is credited to the intervention of Al-Muntada to Combat Violence against Women and women's institutions at the policy level. This was preceded, according to Salameh, by the decision to raise the marriage age, despite the existence of exceptions that are not satisfactory to civil society, in addition to the decision to grant women the right to open bank accounts and issue passports for their children, which constitute achievements. However, Salameh did not consider the administrative decision issued by the Sharia Judicial Council to raise the age of custody for women to be an achievement, especially since the institutions have demanded amending the law in this regard, in addition to the inability of the institutions to complete the issuance of the Family Protection from Violence Law, or amend the Personal Status and Penal Codes, which are still postponed, or even publish the CEDAW Convention in the Official Gazette.

In her assessment of the Shabak (PNGOs Network) intervention in public policies, Ms. Qurei mentioned that it achieved almost 55%. However, many issues still need follow up as recently the relationship between government institutions and civil society organizations weakened in a manner that undermined the civil society's ability to influence public policies. The question of non-profit companies and amendment of government policies relating to them remain unsolved, according to Qurei. She believes that the official restrictions imposed on the activity of non-profit companies and the attempts to amend the Charity Associations Law are related to the PNA's policy of fighting terrorism and money laundering.

Dr. Al-A'raj believes that the government cannot be influenced. This means that civil society participation has been useless for the past five years. This failure does not stem from insufficient civil society efforts but rather from lack of government will. She adds that the Ministry of Women's Affairs, for example, although being a policy ministry, it deals with the civil society and the General Union of Palestinian Women but does not fulfill its policy role. She also believes that influence on written policies does not mean they will be applied because of insufficient financial budget as is the case of the Ministry of Labor.

As for Al-Hijawi, he assesses the influence on public policies as unsatisfactory to date especially when the government is not serious about accepting reform or amending public policies. The government holds the pretext of emergency to absolve itself of its responsibilities in this regard, including the government's policy vis-à-vis non-profit companies.

Dr. Al-Aboushi explained that the Medical Relief participated effectively during the formulation of the National Development Plan, especially with regard to the development of the health sector, in addition to the role of the Medical Relief, through the health sector in the network, in thwarting the government's monopoly of comprehensive national health insurance, and working with the Ministry of Social Development to develop a model of a basket of services for people with disabilities, and adopting their right to obtain free health insurance, and the partnership between the Relief and the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education in the issue of school health, stressing the ability of civil society to influence sub-policies: such as opening health centers in remote villages, or cooperating with local councils to treat polluted drinking water.

Salama believes that collective action is more effective, but it is accompanied by major challenges, the most important of which is the presence of partners who agree on a common vision and goal to ensure influence on policies, in addition to the will and ability to follow up, which varies between institutions. Al-Bitar confirms what Salama said, that collective action in influencing public policies has better results than individual institutional work. Al-Hijawi agrees with Salama that coalitions and

alliances are more influential than individual work of institutions in the field of influencing public policies and accountability for them. In his opinion, the objection to joint action is lowering the ceiling of demands, or not agreeing on escalation to ensure broader participation of institutions. Likewise, Dr. Al-Aboushi agrees, and in his opinion, that networks and coalitions play a role in influencing public policies, and their returns are stronger and clearer. Dr. Al-Araj is concerned about the ability of coalitions to influence, but she sees the need for an institution to assume leadership based on knowledge production that comes within a clearly defined advocacy plan.

According to Salameh, Al-Muntada organizes a monthly meeting to assess its work and adapt its action plan. The annual assessment covers completed activities and approval of the next month's activity. It also evaluates the lobbying and advocacy campaigns including the participation of member organizations in each campaign. She added that Al-Muntada works with flexibility to provide protection for women. The most salient model is its work during the current war launched by the state of occupation against the Gaza Strip. Al-Muntada regeared its activities to respond to the new updates. The monthly minutes of meetings include activity reports with findings, lessons learned and recommendations for the next phase.

Similarly, PYALARA requests from its staff and volunteers to submit reports on the meetings they attended without which they will be counted as not participating. The reports are discussed in periodic monitoring and follow-up meetings to learn lessons and identify challenges, successes and failures. The meetings also aim to develop or amend interventions. As for the Consultative Commission, it does not ask its representatives in official meetings on public policies to submit internal reports since their internal evaluation and lessons learned meetings are not institutionalized. As for the Palestinian medical Relief Society, it documents its interventions as part of its annual reports. As for the evaluation and lessons learned. It is usually included in internal monthly reports.

The network does not document its work in the field of influencing public policies in internal reports that highlight progress, identify gaps, and draw lessons. A. Qurei adds: It often resorts to oral follow-up with the network staff or member institutions in various sectors, as the smooth transfer of information between them is weak. However, this does not negate holding internal meetings to evaluate interventions in the field of public policies, according to Qurei. As for (Miftah), it asks its staff to document their interventions and activities within international missions, while for local missions, the institution is satisfied with an oral report from the person responsible for the file, but the administrative staff in the institution holds a weekly follow-up meeting, which contributes to the flow of information between the staff and officials in the institution.

Mr. Issam Al-Arouri pointed out that the Jerusalem Center for Legal Aid and Human Rights continues its daily work through an executive council formed of the center's department directors. It meets periodically and is responsible for evaluating interventions and work at all levels, including influencing and holding public policies accountable. He added that the executive council is independent from the Director General to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that work continues when the Director General is busy or absent.

Internal Gaps:

Salameh believes that the internal gaps in civil society, which negatively affect participation in influencing public policies, stem from the fact that the movement for social change is a slow movement, and its results are intangible in the short term, and influencing policies is one of the most difficult issues facing Al-Muntada's work, in addition to the fact that the tools of influence need to be reviewed and developed, and to go beyond seasonal work in addressing issues from institutions. She adds: One of the most important gaps related to coalition work is the waste of time on procedural issues such as organizing meetings at the expense of the issue itself, in addition to the difficulty of raising funds for some issues, which makes Al-Muntada work with minimal capabilities.

As for the internal gaps in the Pyalara Foundation, Al-Baitar believes that sustainable financial resources are the biggest gap, which in turn affects human resources. The foundation suffers from the absence of a human rights officer or advocate in the foundation, which puts pressure on the existing staff. Al-Hijawi believes that the lack of advanced training on influencing public policies is one of the gaps in the advisory body, in addition to capacity building and keeping up with updates in the field of mobilization and advocacy tactics. A. Qurei emphasizes the weakness of the current human cadres in influencing public policies, as lobbying and advocacy are not a job in her opinion, but rather a specialty that needs a qualified staff to perform this role.

Miftah faces the same gap in terms of the availability of qualified human resources to influence public policies, especially with the multiplicity of meetings and specializations in the presence of only one official who is concerned with public policy affairs. Dr. Al-Araj adds: Institutions will face a funding crisis in the coming period, with a number of funders heading to conduct a survey of partner institutions, their staff, and the beneficiaries of their work, after the Hamas movement's attack on the occupying state on October 7, 2024.

External Challenges:

Salameh believes that the external challenges are primarily represented by the presence of the occupation, in addition to the absence of the Legislative Council and its supervisory role over the executive authority, the absence of political will for change, and the conservative societal environment at both the official and societal levels

In turn, Ms. Hania Al-Bitar pointed to the lack of will among official bodies for change, adding that PYALARA, for example, had taken the initiative on its own and presented an integrated vision to the Ministry of Education to compensate for the educational loss among students in the Gaza Strip, as a result of the recent Israeli war, and among students in the West Bank, as a result of the teachers' strike during the past two years, and what the ministry faced during the spread of the (Covid-19) pandemic, with joint efforts between the ministry and civil society. However, despite the ministry announcing that it had received the initiative positively, it did not cooperate and implemented part of it alone, while some civil institutions implemented the initiative individually and did not adopt it as a national policy implemented by all relevant official and civil institutions. In addition to the challenges mentioned above, there is the challenge of competition between institutions themselves. Often, instead of institutions supporting and backing each other, competition over funding and project implementation becomes the norm, especially when an institution's relationship with an international partner is harmed, based on the institution's national position. According to Bitar, the biggest challenge facing institutions in Palestine is being labeled as terrorists by Zionist institutions (NGO monitors), which negatively affects the institution's relationship with its international partners and funders, to the point of severing ties and funding.

Ms. Al-Qawasmi pointed out that centralizing and limiting the leadership of civil society coalitions is a challenge that hinders the role of Adwar Foundation in influencing public policies, as she believes that the foundation is active enough to qualify it to assume the coordination of one of the coalitions, especially since some institutions may freeze or activate the work of a specific coalition for self-interest.

Dr. Al-Araj highlights the issue of the negative impact of the absence of a right to information law on civil society's work in the field of influencing policies, citing the example of the decision by law amending the Personal Status Law, which stipulates raising the marriage age in 2019, as the Sharia Judicial Council has not responded to civil society's requests to provide it with data on the exceptions to this amendment to date.

Al-Hijawi agrees with Al-Bitar about the government's lack of will to accept change or reform public policies in accordance with international human rights law, in addition to the security services' encroachment on public life, which limits the space for civil society to express its opinions, especially since the security services have reviewed them as an institution regarding press releases they had issued regarding specific positions. "We are closer to a patriarchal system than a participatory democratic system" is the biggest external challenge to the work of institutions, according to Dr. Al-Aboushi, adding: The absence of state oversight institutions such as the Legislative Council, in addition to the absence of a democratic environment, limits the partnership between official and civil institutions.

Qurei believes that the tendency of official bodies to please international parties and their submission to political blackmail weakens the ability of civil society to influence public policies, as international pressure on official bodies is stronger than local pressure. She adds: In many cases, the discourse of civil society itself does not rise to the level of the gravity of the issue it addresses.

Conclusion:

The findings were partly positive and partly challenges. The report highlights the challenges but without undermining the positive value of civil society interventions and their effectiveness to influence. However, the report seeks to highlight the challenges in order to endeavor to overcome them and develop the necessary interventions to promote civil society organizations' effectiveness.

Positive findings were as follows:

1. Some organizations exert more effort than their financial resources and human capacity to influence and be accountable for macro and micro public policies, overcoming their challenges in order to achieve their goals.

2. Most of the organizations surveyed have a high sensitivity to international intervention in local issues, even if they are partners in funding programs and projects, and their role is limited to conveying the reality without making requests to intervene and influence public policies.

3. Organizations play their role in influencing public policies and holding them accountable through their membership in the various civil society coalitions formed for this purpose, while they play their role in influencing sub-policies or micro-policies through organized institutional work, according to their specialization.

4. The organizations' work in influencing public policies is based on the mobilization and advocacy process as a strategic tool for influence, while the accountability process is based on various tools, including hearings, the use of media, and social media platforms.

Challenges to institutional effectiveness include:

1. Most institutions suffer from a lack of material resources, as they seek to provide them through projects, where the lobbying and advocacy track is added to the project, not within a program that depends on stable funding, which limits sustainable professional interventions to influence and hold public policies accountable.

2. They also suffers from the lack of expertise of human cadres and their lack of experience in the field of influencing and holding public policies accountable, as some institutions consider the period of service as an input in capacity building, which is a long-term resource that weakens their capabilities in this field.

3. The participation of some institutions is limited to confirming attendance and presence in official meetings and meetings, without actual participation in discussions or influencing the process and public policy making. On the other hand, some organizations involve the same stakeholders in meetings to influence policies and hold decision makers accountable, especially in sub-policies.

4. Weak participation of members of public and administrative bodies, according to their specializations, in an organized manner in the process of participation in influencing and holding public policies accountable.

5. There is a clear gap in the use of UN human rights protection mechanisms, both contractual and non-contractual, due to the State of Palestine's recent accession to international human rights conventions, which it joined in 2014.

6. Weak internal documentation in organizations, which negatively affects their ability to monitor, evaluate, draw lessons, and develop paths to influence public policies.

7. While most of the surveyed institutions agreed on the effectiveness of coalitions and their greater ability to influence public policies, some institutions criticized attempts to control and influence their work, so they go to activate a particular coalition or discourage its effectiveness depending on the interests of those institutions.

8. The internal gaps within civil society organizations and the difficulty of consensus among them limit their effectiveness in influencing public policies, especially in light of the fact that social change is slow-moving and its results are not tangible in the short term.

9. The absence of many legislations that guarantee wider spaces for action and participation, such as the right to information law, limits the effectiveness of civil society organizations in influencing and holding them accountable.

10. Finally, the lack of will of successive governments, their difficulty in accepting criticism and change, and their rejection of openness and participation have negatively affected the effectiveness of civil society organizations in influencing public policies.

Recommendations:

- Form a specialized coalition to influence and hold accountable public policies, aiming to unify institutional efforts to enhance influence, including a sectoral structure in which specialized institutions are elected to facilitate the tasks of each sector. Rely on the resources and staff of member institutions to implement their interventions to achieve their goals.

- Establish a permanent communication channel between civil society and the government to influence public policies, with periodic and spontaneous meetings, through which policy and sectoral priorities and timelines are set, taking into account the principles of partnership, accountability, and change.

- Organized pressure on official bodies to issue a law on the right to access to information, as it is a key pillar in building trends about public policies, and an important tool for collecting official information and identifying written public policies and undocumented practices.

- Create a youth incubator of university graduates, build their capacities to influence public policies, and stimulate their lobbying and advocacy skills to become a specialized human resource for institutions.

- Democratize existing coalitions to ensure that they are not dominated, and separate the facilitation and secretariat functions, so that institutions rotate the facilitation functions within a democratic electoral framework, while a specific institution is responsible for documenting the minutes of the meetings and compiling documents to serve as a reference for work.

- Build the capacity of organizations to intervene before UN contractual and non-contractual mechanisms as one of the paths of pressure and advocacy to influence public policies, as a voluntary international accountability tool to which the State of Palestine has freely joined.

- Build capacities in the area of documenting work and internal follow-up on public policy issues, including continuous evaluation to identify progress, gaps, lessons learned, and adjust courses of action.

- Involve members of the public and administrative bodies in an organized manner within their competencies in the process of participating in influencing public policies and holding them accountable.

- Hold periodic pre-determined meetings with the competent authorities to discuss public policies, accountability and follow-up, especially since organizations are often surprised that public policies are issued without their participation in the process of making them, or that the final document issued did not take into account the observations and recommendations made by civil society.

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Interviews:

No.	Organization	Representative	Governorate	Date of interview
1	Human Rights and Democracy Media Center (SHAMS)	Dr. Omar Rahhal	Ramallah	25/04/2024
2	Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization Forum Against Domestic Violence Against Women – Al-Muntada	Ms. Sabah Salameh	Ramallah- all governorates	28/04/2024
3	Palestinian Medical Relief Society	Dr. Mohammad Al-Abboushi	Ramallah- All governorates	29/04/2024
4	Palestinian Youth Association for Leadership and Rights Activation	Ms. Hania Al-Bitar Mr. Hamdi Hamamrah	Ramallah	30/04/2024
5	Palestinian Consultative Commission for the Development of NGOs	Mr. Ahmad Hijawi	Jenin	30/04/2024
6	Palestinian NGOs Network	Ms. Dua Qurei	Ramallah-all governorates	02/05/2024
7	Center for Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights -Huriya	Mr. Hilmi Al-A'raj	Ramallah	05/05/2024
8	QADER for Community Development	Ms. Lana Al-Bandak	Bethlehem	06/05/2024
9	Roles for Social Change Association – ADWAR	Ms. Sahar Al-Qawasmi	Hebron	09/05/2024
10	The Palestinian Initiative for The Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy - MIFTAH	Ms. Tahreer Al-A'raj	Ramallah	11/05/2024
11	Social and Economic Policies Monitor – Al-Marsad	Mr. Firas Jaber	Ramallah	13/05/2024
12	Union of Agricultural Work Committees	Mr. Fuad Abu Yousef	Ramallah – All governorates	02/06/2024
13	Jerusalem Center for Legal Aid and Human Rights	Mr. Issam Arouri	Jerusalem – Ramallah – Nablus – Salfeet	02/06/2024

AMAN
Transparency Palestine

Coalition for Accountability and Integrity – AMAN

AMAN was established in 2000 as a civil society organization that seeks to combat corruption and promote integrity, transparency and accountability in the Palestinian society. The Coalition was first formed by an initiative from a number of civil society organizations working in the field of democracy, human rights and good governance. In 2006, the Coalition was accredited as a national chapter for Transparency International.

AMAN is a Palestinian think tank and a specialized body providing knowledge on corruption at the local and regional level through producing specialized reports and studies. The periodic publications include: The annual Integrity and Anti-Corruption Report, the annual Palestinian Integrity Index and the National Integrity System studies and reports, in addition to the Coalition's continued contributions to produce reports and studies on the status of corruption in the Arab region.

As part of the global anti-corruption movement - and of international alliances and partnerships with relevant specialized coalitions and organizations - AMAN plays a key role in the transfer and contextualization of necessary international knowledge and tools to combat corruption in all sectors.

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